

A Choice of Two Futures: What Would You Choose?

Yesterday, Republicans unveiled a more-of-the-same budget for fiscal year 2013 that ends the Medicare guarantee while protecting tax cuts for the wealthy, and puts our economic recovery at risk. The Republican budget makes the wrong choices and places the burden of deficit reduction onto seniors, the middle class, working families, and the most vulnerable by refusing to ask the wealthiest among us to contribute.

Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan called on the American people to make a choice between two futures for our nation. Here's a look at our future under the Republican budget – and the future Democrats envision instead:

Two futures for Medicare and Medicaid:

The Republican budget:

- Ends the Medicare guarantee and increases costs for seniors – replacing Medicare's guarantee of health security with a voucher that shifts higher and higher costs onto seniors and the disabled over time.
- Reopens the prescription drug donut hole, increasing seniors' drug costs by up to \$44 billion through 2020, including \$2.2 billion in 2012 alone.
- Takes away free coverage of preventive care and wellness visits, increasing beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs.
- Cuts Medicaid by \$1.7 trillion over the next decade, and turns Medicaid into a block grant that jeopardizes access to affordable health and nursing home care for seniors and the disabled.

Democrats remain committed to strengthening and preserving Medicare and Medicaid for current and future beneficiaries.

What would you choose?

Two futures for reducing our deficit:

The Republican budget:

- Proposes more than \$1 trillion in tax cuts for families making more than \$250,000, with millionaires receiving an average tax cut of \$150,000.
- Calls for tax reform that will likely result in greater tax cuts for the wealthy.

Democrats are calling for plan to bring down our deficit in a balanced way – unlike the Republican budget that cuts taxes for the wealthy at the expense of seniors, the middle class, and the most vulnerable among us.

What would you choose?

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 3/21/12

Two futures for health care:

The Republican budget:

- Repeals patient protections and allows insurance companies to once again:
 - Deny coverage to children and adults with pre-existing conditions,
 - Cancel coverage when people get sick,
 - Place lifetime or annual dollar limits on health care coverage,
 - Prohibit parents from keeping children up to age 26 on their insurance plans,
 - No longer have to cover recommended preventive services.

Democrats put American families in control of their own health with the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, and now Americans are experiencing better coverage and enjoying lower health care costs or seeing costs grow more slowly.

What would you choose?

Two futures for infrastructure:

The Republican budget cuts highway funding by 25%, weakening our ability to support the flow of commerce and putting jobs at risk.

Democrats want to invest in our nation's infrastructure so that we can help businesses grow and move products quickly and cheaply.

What would you choose?

Two futures for our veterans:

The Republican budget cuts funding for veterans' programs by 13%.

The Democratic-led Congress made historic progress for veterans – including the largest increase in VA funding in history – and Democrats remain committed to ensuring they have the resources they need.

What would you choose?

Two futures for education:

The Republican budget:

- Sharply cuts Pell grants, reducing the financial assistance millions of Americans need to help pay for higher education.
- Cuts funding for Head Start, kicking more than 200,000 children out of the program.

Democrats believe we must invest in education so we can out-educate our competitors and build a competitive workforce.

What would you choose?

Two futures for science, technology, and innovation:

The Republican budget undermines American competitiveness by cutting investments in science, medical research, space and technology by over \$11 billion by 2014. These areas have historically provided technological innovations that have revolutionized our economy, and critical research and development resources that have supported private industry and job creation.

Democrats are committed to making investments that allow us to out-innovate our competitors and keep America the world's leader.

What would you choose?

Two futures for energy:

The Republican budget undermines our clean energy future by:

- Cutting investments in the Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and its applied research program, known as ARPA-E, that was established specifically to conduct energy research that industry by itself cannot support but where success would provide dramatic benefits for the nation.
- Eliminating jobs by setting back efforts to put a million electric vehicles on the road, retrofit residential homes, and make commercial buildings more efficient.
- Failing to boost all energy sources by eliminating tax support for renewable energy generation and the domestic jobs created by those energy projects.

Democrats are pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy that invests in both conventional and alternative energy technologies, such as those that harness energy from wind, solar, and biofuel sources, so we can reduce our dependence upon foreign oil and generate the power we need.

What would you choose?